**Need to introduce job-linked vocational courses**

4000. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a great need to introduce job-linked vocational courses;

(b) if so, the States where such courses have been introduced; and

(c) the emphasis laid by the Central Government for funding the State Governments to set-up institutions for imparting, training and education for job-linked courses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA): (a) to (c) Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Vocationalisation of Secondary Education launched in February, 1988, vocation courses have been introduced at the higher secondary level in selected schools. All State/UTs except Lakshadweep have joined the vocational education programme for which substantial financial assistance is provided by the Central Government.

**Backlog of reserved seats in Railways**

4001. SHRI MOHINDAR SINGH KALYAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of posts reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are lying vacant in the Ministry of Railways;

(b) if so, full details thereof, category-wise, and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the time by which the backlog of the posts reserved for SCs/STs is likely to be filled-up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) and (b) As per Department of Personnel & Training's directives, a Special Recruitment Drive was launched during the year 1995 to wipe out the shortfall of vacancies reserved for SC/STs existing on 1.4.95 through direct recruitment. The shrotfall identified in the Special Recruitment Drive launched on 1.4.95 vis-a-vis the shortfall cleared by 16.7.96 and balance of vacancies is detailed below:

| Particulars | Group C | | Group D | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | SC | ST | SC | ST |
| Identified as on 1.4.95 for direct recruitment; | 361 | 431 | 528 | 990 |
| Cleared by 16.7.96 | 360 | 406 | 528 | 990 |
| Balance of vacancies | 001 | 023 | Nil | Nil |

The balance of 24 vacancies could not be filled up due to non-availability of SC/STs with requisite qualifications in technical categories viz. Pharmacists, Staff Nurse, Stenographers, Radiographers, etc.

(c) For clearing the balance shortfall of Special Recruitment Drive-1995 and the shortfall existing as on 30.6.96, another Special Recruitment Drive has been launched from 15.7.96 to be completed by 31.3.97.

**Monitoring of Water quality of Godavari river**

4002. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the water quality of the Godavari river at Kovvur and